

COI Implementation Unit

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY REPORT AND OTHER REFORMS

REPORT SUMMARY FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2022

The Commission of Inquiry Implementation Unit has reported to the Governor and Premier on the status of work completed up to the end of August 2022.

Based on the timelines agreed in the Framework for Implementation of the Recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry Report and Other Reforms:

Work on 47 of the 50 recommendations has begun. The remaining three are scheduled to begin in 2023.

The main work on thirteen of the Recommendations has been completed. However, the Ministries continue to do follow up and monitoring work on these and report to the Unit on progress made in these areas.

Of the thirty-four recommendations being actioned now, 79.6% are in progress and on track and 20.4% are in progress with challenges to meet deadlines. Typically, these challenges have resulted from delays owing to the expansion of the remit of work being done to address a recommendation.

The Dashboard gives a pictorial summary of the status of the fulfilment of the COI recommendations as agreed in the Framework. The Key shares each of the 50 Recommendations now being worked on as the main focus of Government of the Virgin Islands to raise our standards of governance in our beautiful Territory so you can track the status of work on each recommendation.

KEY OF COI RECOMMENDATIONS

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| A02 | Review the Constitution to enable the people of the BVI to meet their aspirations, including those in respect of self-government within the context of modern democracy. |
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KEY OF COI RECOMMENDATIONS

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| A03 | Review discretionary powers held by elected public officials, removing where unnecessary or, where considered necessary, ensuring they are exercised in accordance with clearly expressed and published guidelines. |
| A04 | Review all areas of government based on audit timetable and prepare reports on appropriate areas. |
| B01 | Review the Commissions of Inquiry Act and make recommendations designed to improve the conduct of Commissions of Inquiry in the BVI. |
| B02 | Establish a system of Registration of Interests, open to public access, with effective provisions to require compliance. |
| B03 | Properly formulate and cost a plan for implementation of Registration of Interests system to cover all persons in public life. |
| B04 | Consider extension of Registration of Interests system to other public officials on an incremental basis. |
| B05 | Amend the Constitution to make clear circumstances in which a person seeking election to, or a Member of the House is required to declare interest in contracts with Government. |
| B06 | Amend Constitution to make clear whether the term “Government of the Virgin Islands” encompasses statutory bodies. |
| B07 | Review welfare benefits and grants system. |
| B08 | Cease House of Assembly Members’ and Government Ministries’ Assistance Grants. |
| B09 | Reallocate assistance grants funds to Social Development Department for distribution. |
| B10 | Review local district projects and develop open and transparent process for proper recording, assessment and monitoring of projects. |
| B11 | Determine process for allocating grants for educational scholarships. |
| B12 | Audit all grants made by House of Assembly Members for the last three years. |
| B13 | Audit all four COVID-19 Assistance Programmes. |
| B14 | Criminally investigate obstruction of the Internal Auditor by the Premier’s Office related to COVID-19 Assistance Programmes. |
| B15 | Criminally investigate obstruction of Auditor General by Premier’s Office, related to COVID-19 Assistance Programmes. |
| B16 | Consider amending the Audit Act to make a failure to cooperate with or otherwise impede Auditor General a criminal offence. |
| B17 | Amend the Public Service Code and Service Commission Regulations to make failure to cooperate with the Auditor General or Internal Auditor an act of gross misconduct. |
| B18 | Audit all major contracts in respect of major projects in the past three years. |
| B19 | Include provision that there be no associated contracts which together would trigger an open tender process, for all Government contracts and Include Internal Audit opinion in all proposed tender waivers to Cabinet. |
| B20 | Refer the SCB Harbour Development project to consider criminal investigation. |

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| B21 | Refer the VI Neighbourhood Partnership Project to consider criminal investigation. |
| B22 | Audit all Claude Skelton-Cline Government contracts since 2019. |
| B23 | Audit EZ Shipping-Government contracts concerning provision of radar barges since 2019. |
| B24 | Review all Statutory Boards to determine overall level of governance and steps required to remedy any deficiencies. |
| B25 | Review provisions under which statutory bodies are established and maintained. |
| B26 | Establish overriding statute setting out framework for all statutory boards. |
| B27 | Constitutional Review Commission to consider whether a Statutory Boards Commission should be responsible for selecting and revoking statutory board membership and monitoring internal policies and procedures. |
| B28 | Develop Protocol for appointment and removal of statutory board members. |
| B29 | Consider revoking any appointments to statutory boards made since 2019. |
| B30 | Review processes for disposal of Crown Land. |
| B31 | Audit all disposals of Crown Land over the last three years. |
| B32 | Refer disposal of parcel 310 of Block 2938B for criminal investigation. |
| B33 | Review processes for grant of residency and belonger status. |
| B34 | Audit all applications for and grants of residency and belonger status under the Fast Track scheme. |
| B35 | Drive forward Public Service Transformation Programme. |
| B36 | Finalise Public Service Management Code or Act. |
| B37 | Coordinate expenditure on training of public officers within the Department of Human Resources. |
| B38 | Review law enforcement and justice systems. |
| B39 | Vet all serving HM Customs and Immigration Department Officers. |
| B40 | Investigate possible corruption within HM Customs. |
| B41 | Consider ensuring RVIPF and other enforcement agencies have facilities and powers to prevent, monitor and detect crime. |
| B42 | Review Criminal Procedure Rules to give courts modern case management powers. |

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| B43 | Consider revisions to Jury Act to increase size of jury pool and grant court wider powers to hear judge-only criminal trials. |
| B44 | Consider building upon current initiatives for revising, consolidating and publishing in readily accessible form the laws of the BVI. |
| B45 | Complaints Commissioner reports annually to Governor, Deputy Governor and House of Assembly. |
| OR1 | Reform electoral process including campaign finance. |